



SONNETS AND FOLK SONGS

SONNETS

*With Folk Songs from the
Spanish*

By

HAVELOCK ELLIS



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PREFACE

THIS little volume is made up of two groups of verse, like in amount but totally unlike in kind as well as in date. The writer has decided that the only way to evoke any sort of unity — and that an artificial unity — is to twist the two strands together. It remains easy for the reader to follow whichever thread he prefers, while the writer will have succeeded in collecting, from all the verse he has written in various forms, whatever seems to him — whether or not to others — worth while to collect.

The original verse selected is all in sonnet form, the form for which the writer had a predilection — possibly because it offers a restless scope for risky experiment — and was all written in youth, from the age of seventeen when a teacher in the Australian Bush to the age of twenty-five when a student of medicine at St. Thomas's Hospital in London, thus coming to an end early in 1885, the sonnet here placed first probably being the latest. There are none of later date, or indeed any original verse in other form; the author became too absorbed in the immediate practical and emotional interests of a many-sided activity in life to find time to bend

over the images of life in the *camera obscura* of memory; he turned to prose and possibly he has never been a properly prosaic writer of prose — except maybe in the matter of clarity — because from the age of twelve he had learnt to write chiefly in the medium of verse. But, while other forms of verse have been excluded, all the sonnets the author ever completed, even the first attempts, have wisely or otherwise been here reproduced, with the result that there is much inequality of achievement. One starts with one's head full of the songs of the masters of old; one has brooded over them in silence, one has shouted them aloud in solitary walks, they have recurred to memory with a sudden thrill of delight amid the occupations of the day. So that when one begins one's own song it is at first mixed with the echoes, conscious and unconscious, of those who had gone before, and one merely attains a smooth conventionality which fails to express the form of one's own thought. Then, a little later, one sees that the masters of old, however great, have not presented one's own self, and therewith one's work begins instinctively to take the shape, even if more rugged, of one's own soul. There is a certain interest in this development, and that may be a sufficient reason

for bringing these sonnets forward in the entire series, even the earliest crude and feeble attempts. This decision to reject the standpoint of art and technique involved a certain courage. But as the writer now views these verses they lie so far back in the remote past that to judge them technically no longer interests him. He views them as an archæological record, interesting apart from any technical quality or the absence of it, the record of personal experiences in the evolution of an individual person's spirit. A great many more, it is true, were sketched out and begun and put aside, to be completed on a morrow that never arose. It was most often the octet that was incomplete, the writer's usual method being, after a sonnet had been planned, to begin at the end and work backwards. A few of those most nearly completed (*pp.* 15, 31, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 59, 65, 81, 83) have now been finished, with due care to retain their original spirit, but with a result that leads the writer to suspect that it may have been by a wise instinct he threw them aside. All the others stand exactly as they were first written. Some of them were intended to form part of a series to be called *Life and the Soul*, 'being certain things that the Soul said to Life,' and bearing the motto: 'The

Life is more than meat, And the Body than raiment,' since it seemed to the youthful author when he looked around the world in which he lived — and might it not have so seemed to the youth even to-day? — that all, even the so-called leaders of men, were merely occupied with 'meat' and with 'raiment' — with the material conditions of life and the external rules of morality — and that no one was seeking to grasp the actual naked and essential facts of human existence; so that 'Life' here became a large symbol with a significance peculiar to the writer. The sonnets intended for that series are here mingled with the rest, nor are they arranged in order of time, though the dates are given whenever they could be ascertained, and an inquisitive reader may be able to arrange them in approximately chronological order.

Taken altogether, it now seems to the writer, this whole group of sonnets lays bare the roots of the impulses that have stirred throughout all the activities of his life, from *The New Spirit* in which in 1889, nearly five years after the sonnets ceased, he first put forth his programme, to *The Dance of Life* with which, in 1923, he sought to round it off. Although some of the sonnets were published in magazines and journals soon after

they were written, the author wrote them for himself and had no special desire to call public attention to them. When the tree is growing it is just as well not to lay bare the roots; but when growth has probably ceased it is no longer any matter.

An interval of nearly twenty years followed, during which no verse of any kind was made, the writer being fully occupied in other fields which for the most part were, seemingly, far remote from poetry. But in 1890 he went on a first memorable journey to Spain; there he became acquainted with Spanish folk-songs and the part they play in the life of the people, and he carried away the little volume of *Cantares Populares* collected by Ramon Caballero, in the following years often turning to it. For there is something haunting about these songs, and indeed no-one who has even merely heard a *saeta* — the intense little ‘arrow’ of song — flung out by a kneeling young girl, whose devotion has clearly had much shyness to overcome, when the image of the Virgin is borne in solemn procession along the street, is likely to forget the experience. But there was as yet no thought of producing any English versions. That impulse only arose some ten years later, about 1901. From that time onwards,

though sometimes only at long intervals, the author would copy into notebooks such of the songs as appealed to him, and at odd moments during solitary rambles in various parts of Europe — from Carbis Bay in Cornwall, where they were begun, to Mount Lycabettos in Greece — turn them into English. In that way he has finally accumulated a considerable number, of which the larger part have been taken from the extensive collection (some 5000) of *Cantares Populares de Castilla* by Narciso Alonso Cortés in the *Revue Hispanique* for 1914, but some also from the collections of Ramon Caballero and of Rodriguez Márin, the most extensive of all, containing over 8000 *coplas*, though many folk-songs are slight variations of the same statement. The first of the versions to be published appeared in *The Lover's Calendar* edited by the author's wife in 1912. Here they attracted the attention of some poets and lovers of poetry, and that was a stimulus to further activity in a field of translation at that time untouched. Later, it may be mentioned, in an essay in his book *Shelley and Calderon, and Other Essays*, published in 1920, Salvador de Madariaga aroused the interest of the general English reader and followed it up in 1922 with some attempt at English versions in a

little volume of *Spanish Folk-Songs*. Long before this, however, in the *Yale Courant* of April 1910, Professor H. R. Lang had published an instructive and attractive sketch of 'The Folk-Song of Modern Spain,' and yet earlier, Hesse, in the *Mercure de France* of 15 May, 1907, in 'Chansons Andalouses' had charmingly described, a little in the manner of Pierre Loti, the impressions of an instructed and sympathetic visitor to southern Spain. A more scholarly and precise account of the matter was given in 1914 by Rodriguez Márin, perhaps the most competent authority, in his essay *La Copla: Bosquejo de un estudio folklorico*.

Spanish folk-songs had, however, long been known to those who know — and to know is to love — Spain and the Spaniards. Spain is the only large country of Europe in which the gift of more or less spontaneously lyric song belongs to the people. It is not always, or often, of high quality; that we could not expect; but we gain the impression that it is widely diffused among both men and women, through all parts of Spain, with local peculiarities in some provinces, but with a tendency everywhere — though other forms exist — to take the shape of a four-lined couplet of varying and often very irregular shape. The stanza has an uncertain number of syllables

to the line; it may have double rhymes, it may have only a single rhyme; it may have internal rhymes, it may have no rhymes, but either assonances or alliterations or both: sometimes it may seem to have nothing at all which characterises verse and be merely the rhythmic lilt of a lyric cry, or the expression of a merely bizarre or trivial thought. But it is this very freedom, as well as the splendid perfection at times attained, which bears witness to the genuine spontaneity of the impulse.

The profusion of these folk songs, as now written down by Spanish scholars from the lips of the people, enables the translator to choose those, not necessarily the best, which seem to fall most happily to his own tongue. When the present translator began he had no definite rule for rendering the songs save to rhyme the second and fourth lines and to preserve three beats to the line. Later he decided that the first and third line in this form of irregular accentual verse should have feminine endings, so that the failure to observe this rule usually, though not always, indicates that the version is of early date. Thus in shape these renderings, while nearly always faithful verbally, differ from the original by avoiding most of the variations of effect those

show and presenting, for the most part, a certain loose uniformity. So far as his own vision and skill extend, this seems the best method and it has made possible a fair degree of approximation to the spirit of the originals. The absence of any principle of selection, save the rule that those *coplas* only should be taken which, when thrown into English, fall with some safety on to their feet, has had this good result: the selection fairly corresponds to the wide range of the originals, and in so corresponding brings before the reader the range of the essential spirit of Spain, from its tragic passion, through its sweet or playful humanity, to its astringent philosophy. The translator is aware that with the rarest and finest of these songs, he has, when he attempted them, failed. But it must always be so. Even a great master — Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam* is the familiar example — can only translate a poem perfectly by transforming its perfection. The present translator has had no wish even to attempt such transformation. But he ventures to think that the results here presented may be of interest to those who do not know, and even to those who know, the rich treasury of Spanish *Cantares Populares*.

SONNETS AND FOLK SONGS

ISOLATION

FROM the uneven ground great columns spring
To dim far heights. At vespers or at
nones

The one-voiced dialogue in shouts or
moans

Through the triforium gloom floats echoing.

No unseen choirs sweet showers of music fling;
Below the altar, on these worn grey
stones,

While solemn sacrifice my soul atones,
I serve myself the mass myself must sing.

Alone I stand, and here for ever swing

This censer, whence large curls of incense
rise

Round clustered pillars to the clerestories.

This side the western door, with offering,

No separate soul my altar may attend:

Alone, apart, I stand until the end.

March, 1885.

FOLK SONGS

VARIOUS authors have written,
Among them Saint Augustine,
That they never can find an ending
Who know not how to begin.

∴

HIS brow bears this inscription,
Each child that first draws breath,
In letters deeply branded,
Which read: 'Condemned to death.'

∴

Do you think that because I sing
My life glides joyous by?
My life is like the swan's
And I sing because I die.

∴

FOUR things are for man still urgent
All things other far above,
— Or so it looks to my poor seeming —
Hunger and sleep and thirst and love.

IN HELL

WHEN I see how rich blessings still await
On happy men who pass and calmly gaze
At mangled limbs that strew the world's
broad ways,
How women still can stand, erect, elate,
On dunghills that their fellows' blood must sate,
How all grow hard, for 'I am I,' each says,
'These things have been since there were
nights and days,
And Lazarus is Lazarus at the gate:'

I shudder on the verge of that abyss
Of self-content, wherein I see men lie,
That is so dark that all things there
seem well;
And then, as one who knows at last what is,
I turn to my grief-laden heart and cry:
'O heart! despair, despair: we are in
Hell!'

1884.

FOLK SONGS

LIKE the blind I live in darkness,
A sorrowful girl am I;
Shall I reach the light, I wonder,
At the hour I come to die.

∴

A STAR from out the heavens,
Has lately lost its place,
And now within you is dwelling,
And shining out of your face.

∴

BEYOND the love of a mother
No other love may be,
And the sorrow beyond all sorrows
Is the sorrow none can see.

∴

I WAS born, they say, in tears;
In songs I wish to die,
Nor heed the world's ill words,
If I am pleased thereby.

SOPHIA PEROVSKAIA

EXECUTED 16TH APRIL, 1881

SHE would not share the lot of those who make
The world a nest of ills; she gladly met
The thorns of that strange crown, their
 guerdon yet,
Who of Life's bread of freedom dare to break,
And pour Life's wine that after men partake;
And having laboured to redeem the debt
The ages owed, ay, not till she had set
A Czar towards death, she died for life's sweet
 sake.

Heroes and martyrs love and suffer still:
As flashes from earth's smithy they are
 hurled
About the sky to lighten darkest nights.
This has been so for ever, and ever will,
When on the anvil of the grief-worn world
God lays the human mighty Heart and
 smites.

1883.

FOLK SONGS

LET the rich man fill his belly;
Let him fast that has no bread;
And he may sleep in the moonlight
That cannot find a bed.

∴

IF the sea were one great ink-pot
And the sky of paper made,
The evil that's in women
Could not all be said.

∴

IF the sea were one great ink-pot
And of paper all the sky,
It were not enough for telling
How deeply men can lie.

∴

TO love with no return
Is a sad thing to befall;
But a sadder, to come to die
Before having loved at all.

IN THE STRAND

FACES I see, as through the street I go,
 Scarred by disease and sin that burn like
 fire,
 And eyes with cold dead light of 'base
 desire,
Thin lips sucked in by self-absorption so
One scarce can tell if they are human or no,
 Boys whose young candour dies within
 this mire,
 Silly girl-faces that are fair for hire,
And over all a mesh of lies.

I know
How taint of blood, gold-worship, passion's tide,
 Curse of self-seeking, lovelessness of hell,
 Do mould men's forms for ever, as a
 glove
Is moulded by the living hand inside;
 All this, I say, I know, and know as well,
 I never knew a heart I might not love.

FOLK SONGS

IN the day from the womb you were born,
dear,

The flowers were born from the ground,
And over the font at your christening
The nightingales all sang round.

∴

A WINDOW above a window,
Over that a balcony,
And from it a little girl leaning
Who has stolen the heart from me.

∴

O soon you will forget me,
And what has passed to-day;
'Who was that strange man singing?'
To-morrow you will say.

∴

I KNOW no song to sing you,
From memory all have gone;
This only I remember,
That in the sky stars shone.

THE COMING OF SONG

THERE was a yearning void within my heart
As, with a courage which was half despair,
I strove that I my destiny might bear,
And battled as I might my stormy part;
When One, it chanced, a beauteous form & bright,
With tresses, Aphrodite-like mid foam,
Of each white-crested wanton wave the
home,
Was borne upon life's sea before my sight.

O, there was that within her eyes to move
My failing soul, and to raise up, like wine
To one who faints, my thoughts to
noble deeds.
But when, like Pan, that form to grasp I strove,
Press lip to lip, and limb with limb
entwine,
I found, alas, not Syrinx but the reeds.

Carcoar, N.S.W., July, 1876.

FOLK SONGS

FROM what place came the water
That once you gave me to drink?
Since I tasted it I've forgotten
All the things I ought to think.

∴

LAST night I went into the fields
And said to the rosemary: 'Pray,
What herb is a cure for love?'
But the rosemary could not say.

∴

THE way to love you taught me
Upon that hill above:
Oh, may you never teach me
The way to forget to love!

∴

SAD is the fate of those
Who never loved, early or late;
But to love and then forget,
That is the saddest fate.

FOR A PICTURE

THE first Love lived and walked in Greece; he
wore

No sandals, but around his form, like
flame,

A chlamys fell in folds; beyond the same
Shone his resplendent limbs. And then before
We knew him, lo, another Love sprang o'er

The world from a Judæan hill; he came
Face ardent towards the clouds, limbs
clothed in shame;

He smote that other with a sword he bore.

He was so young, he was too proud to bow,
His head towards earth, not wise enough but
now,

Unto the place where that fair first Love
lies,

At last the Nazarene Love hastes to go,
To say sweet words, to raise him that is low,
To kiss him on his lips and on his eyes.

1883.

FOLK SONGS

IF the sighs that arise from my breast
Should chance to meet on their way
The sighs that arise from yours,
What sweet little things they would say!

∴

I WOULD give a world for a look,
For a smile my heavenly bliss,
For a kiss — I cannot tell
What I would give for a kiss.

∴

I LOVE you with such worship
That I am mad, they say;
Well, be it so, I'll gladly
Be mad to my dying day.

∴

YOUR loving thoughts & my loving thoughts
Towards each other lean,
Just like the branches of two trees
Across the road between.

THERE were some happy children once of old,
Who followed Life, & knew upon Life's
face
The fairest smile of her accomplished
grace,
Yet still were children ever cruel and bold.
But then with youth a voice was heard that told
The mysteries of another gloomier race,
Of Heaven and Hell, whose vapours spread
apace;
And over Greece the clouds of sin were rolled.

And now again the voice of Life is heard
Amid the northern mists which slowly
flee;
She says again her great eternal word,
In Greece to children, now to men: 'Be
free;
He must grow strong, clear-eyed, his loins gird,
And lay aside all weights, who follows
Me.'

FOLK SONGS

FOR loving a seraph in Heaven
My hopes of heaven are gone.
Well! We cannot have two Heavens,
And I am content with one.

∴

AH, how I wish, my darling,
That I could become thin air.
I would pass through the walls of your bedroom
And fold myself round you there!

∴

YOU have sent me a beautiful letter
With a little girdle of blue;
But I do not want girdle or letter,
It is you, I want, dear, you!

∴

IF I die before you die, dearest,
Only one thing I ask the Most High,
A window out of the clouds,
To talk to you from the sky.

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL

O SON of Man! whom through the weary years
These poor unconscious Judases of thine
Have well-nigh slain with kisses, this one
sign

My heart within me knows what time it hears
How thy heart, laden with its grief and fears,
Upon the reading of a certain line
With gladness leapt up suddenly like
mine,

At that large utterance of the ancient seer's.

Freedom from bondage of dead law's blind
might,

Another earth for all men, not the few,
The joy of Life that makes the bruised
heart whole:

This is that Christ that is the world's great light,
The glad good news that always will be
new

For healing of the human way-worn
soul.

Sept., 1883.

FOLK SONGS

O MAN of my soul, my lover,
Oh, what have you made me drink?
Everything I have forgotten,
Only of you I think.

∴

BEFORE it can chance I forget you,
O my heart's delight,
The moon will shine in the day-time,
And the sun at night.

∴

FAREWELL! and good be with you,
My lover whom may God bless!
Take care not to drink of the waters
Of the fount of forgetfulness!

∴

OH, forget not to write me letters,
If I must be of you bereft!
You can use the wings of a swallow
When you have no paper left.

SHAKESPEARE

Among the foremost of the world's great sages,
Like the blue sky he stands embracing all,
With perfect art embracing large or small,
So that he voiced the senses of all the ages.
His spirit was no star content to shine
Apart, spurning the work of earth which
brings
Earth's cheerfulness; he mixed with common things
And men, leading the daily life divine.

So that I sometimes think that Nature vast,
Less hard than when Actæon's bones of
old,
Grew white amid Mount Cythæron's wintry
blast,
Clothed herself with a human soul, to
bless
Man with the sight, gazing with awe untold,
Of all her naked unveiled loveliness.

23 July, 1876.

FOLK SONGS

My father was a sailor,
My brother, a sailor was he,
And the man who would be my lover
A sailor he must be.

∴

Oh, a pearl is a thing of much value,
And a diamond yet more than this;
But I know what to me is most precious,
And that is a student's kiss.

∴

Do not look at my face;
I am brown, I am not fair;
When you look, look below my waist,
I am sweet altogether there.

∴

My lover is but a small man,
So I would I have him be;
Fewer leaves and more fruit ever
We find on the little tree.

BEAUTY

OUR souls stretch forth into the Infinite,
Striving in vain to realise and clasp
The Beauty we but see. We cannot grasp
The setting sun's last burst of glorious light;
Alas, it gives us more of pain than pleasure.
And a lip's curved loveliness rounded sweet,
Still, still eludes us; leaving us defeat,
Making us sick and faint in the endeavour,
Like the magnolia's perfume. So our souls
Fall weary back from these aspiring flights,
Content to worship at a humbler shrine,
Amid the common round of daily joys,
* * * * *
The common round — not therefore less divine.

July, 1876.

FOLK SONGS

I'M skilfull at singing and dancing,
The tambourine and the rest,
The way my mother taught me,
While I was sucking her breast.

∴

LAST night with the day's cares over
I dreamt of you as I slept,
I dreamt that you had forgotten.
If you had but seen how I wept!

∴

IMPOSE some other penance
Within my power to fulfil,
For that I should forget you
Is not within my will.

∴

YOU will sooner see the seashore
Sprinkled with stars of the sky,
And sands above in the heavens,
Then see my truth a lie.

TO MY MOTHER

(FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE.)

I.

I AM accustomed to hold high my head:
 If even a King were gazing in my face
 I do not think I would my looks abase;
For I am proud and few things do I dread.
Dear Mother, yet to thee I will confess
 How mightily my haughty spirit feels
 The influence which from thy presence
 steals,
The sweet and gentle power thy words possess.

Is it thy spirit which compels me home,
 Thy lofty spirit which can look things
 through
And reach by love the secrets of God's dome?
 Remembrance pains me now that I should
 do
Such deeds as oft have made with tears to smart
The heart that loves me so, the mother's heart.

FOLK SONGS

THE night is dark as I leave you,
There shines no star in the sky;
But still my way is lightened
By the gleam from your dear eye.

∴

THERE are many sands on the sea shore,
Above's the blue sky bright,
In the garden are many flowers —
But, oh, in your eyes what light!

∴

No lover forgets not ever;
No love but at last grows less;
The only love without ending
Is a mother's tenderness.

∴

THERE remain with me two kisses
I never may forget,
The last my mother gave me,
The first on my lips you set.

II

Once I forsook thee in a mad wild dream;
For I would roam through earth from
place to place,
Seeking if I Love's image might embrace,
And it should be as sweet as it did seem.
Seeking for Love I walked the public ways;
With outstretched hands I paused before each
door,
Asking for love as do for alms the poor;
They laughed, or turned a cold contemptuous
gaze.

And still I ever sought for Love, still sought
For Love, and yet the search still came to naught,
And so I turned towards home and ceased
to rove.
But now I feel thy form before me rise,
And, ah! what see I there within thine eyes?
There is the sweetest, there the long-
sought Love.

Grafton, N.S.W., 1877.

FOLK SONGS

THERE are some who say that absence
Makes lovers to forget,
But they are fools who say so,
And nought of love know yet.

∴

THE widow woman is weeping,
She misses him so sore,
And the married woman is sighing:
'I can bear this man no more.'

∴

THE love I have placed on you,
So true, so firm it is,
If I had placed it on God
I had gained eternal bliss.

∴

IT is love that I am asking.
You'll be my friend instead?
It is of thirst I am dying,
And I find a slice of bread.

LOVE'S MARTYRDOM

I

THE souls that sought to murder Love I greet
In vision: Francis, heart God made a lyre;
Magdalena of Pazzi, whose desire
Not thorns crushed out; Hilarion I meet;
And Abelard with eager weary feet;
Angela, quenching (wrote she) fire by fire;
Young Manon, Roland's after, in that
dire
Dawn of new France, who grieved for dreams too
sweet.

O martyred Love, through all those years who
lay
Scorned, spat upon; fear, hate, contempt
thy part;
Whose sides men pierced, whose soul they could
not slay
— Yea, for their shed blood went to feed
thy heart —
Lo, here is Life! She takes thy hand to say:
'Rise, come, O Love, I know thee what
thou art!'

FOLK SONGS

MOST sorrows come to an end,
Mine last from day to day;
For it's sorrow to come to you,
And sorrow to stay away.

∴

OH, put not trust in women!
I'm a woman and know by birth
That a woman is always too clever
For the cleverest man on earth.

∴

OH, put not your trust in men, dear!
However they weep and pray,
For with their tears they are telling
The price you will have to pay.

∴

A WOMAN and Death's shadow
In this alike you'll find:
You seek them — and they leave you;
You flee — they're close behind.

II

But we, we knew it not, we could not know
That by Love's bondage seeking to be
free

We became slaves indeed; we could not
see

That Lust came in what time we let Love go.
And still Love walks with bowed head to and fro,
And wounded feet that step but wearily,
And hands that scarce can bear his flagon,
while we

Yearn for the larger draughts he shall bestow.

Strong by the passion of grief-laden years,
Richer, though sorrow that long time he
bore,

By pity and the tender grace of tears,
Trodden in sensual mire of shame no
more,

Grown to the scope of Life, behold, Love nears
Far heights of joy he had not seen before.

February, 1883.

FOLK SONGS

YOU seem to me to resemble
The Alexandria rose,
Pale and cool in the day-time,
Warm and red at day's close.

∴

FOR nothing I ask you,
But a kiss, an embrace,
From your stocking a garter,
From your shoe a lace.

∴

IF marriage a day and night lasted,
Or even a week or so,
Why then I too could marry —
But for ever? No, no, no!

∴

THAT men are the very devil
Is what all women say;
And yet they all are longing
For the devil to bear them away.

NOTRE DAME DE LA PLACE BLANCHE

STRONG curve of flanks, large thighs, and feet
that pace

With regal walk, on unknown errand sped,

I note her simple dress, her naked head

Her fair large body, free and open face

Filling with light this light and open space,

And with coquettish tender eyes she
greets

And takes the arm of the slender lad she
meets,

And looks down on him with her queenly grace.

This is the woman that God made of old,

As trees and flower, the joy of earth to
man.

She has no soul and she is glad and bold,

No cord has bound her & she thinks none
can.

To-morrow's refuse she will likely be:

To-day she is this bright strong thing we see.

FOLK SONGS

BACK from the Fair I'm faring,
Nought but a pear I bring,
And for you, my little darling,
Is the whole of that lovely thing.

∴

WHEN two love one another
No need for words to seek,
For the mouth has never a language
To equal eyes that speak.

∴

WE are far away in body,
Yet always near in heart,
And though our lips can speak not,
They kiss while still apart.

∴

'GOODBYE' you must not bid me,
It is too sad a word,
From hearts that love each other
'Goodbye' is never heard.

ARABELLA

A SIMPLE girl who wrought from early morn
Her simple work, with gentle, sweet-eyed
face,
Sweet-lipped, sweet-voiced, and quiet
unshy grace,
Her three and twenty years so child-like borne,
Fell sick. Through dreary autumn weeks forlorn
She bore the ills that seemed to crowd
apace,
Till, like a trampled daisy, one might
trace
The poised head lift, the instinctive grace new-
born.

Bella, what devious paths you trod, and how
You came whence few have come by
Death unmet,
We cannot know. I am glad you might
not die.
When you were ill I cared for you; and now
I think we may not kiss each other — yet
I would my love went with you. So —
goodbye.

1884.

FOLK SONGS

MOST people only find beauty
In eyes that are dark of hue;
I suffer pangs of damnation
For a pair of eyes that are blue.

∴

BLACK eyes, they say, deceive you,
And blue eyes false may be.
But, oh! for the eyes that are hazel,
They are the eyes for me!

∴

THEY say that blue eyes flatter;
And black eyes are not true;
The eyes that are strong and honest
Are the eyes of chestnut hue.

∴

Two things in the world as I know it
Above all jewels I prize,
The great Cathedral of Seville,
And your dark shining eyes.

E. G.

AMONG Life's messengers to me he stands:

When first I heard his voice his young
soul's light

Flashed all itself at once on my soul's
sight,

That looked and knew and loved. And still
Love's bands

Draw to his spirit one that understands

Such gentleness audacious for the right,
And earth grows purer, all its burden
slight,

After the touch of his caressing hands.

This clear, glad soul to me is like a shrine:

An eager weary thing would soar above
Flutters around it full of joys and fears.

Sweet Heart! my heart goes wandering after
thine,

Too shy to bring thee all its cup of love,
Fragrant with silent prayers, with un-
known tears.

1883.

FOLK SONGS

IF you would that I went on singing
The space of a whole year long,
For you I could still be singing,
And never twice one song.

∴

I HEARD the grave's voice asking,
When I lay ten years below:
'Have you forgotten your sweetheart?'
And still I answered 'No.'

∴

PEOPLE think we are not lovers,
For we never talk or meet.
They would be a little wiser
If they saw our hearts, my sweet!

∴

IF water were ink,
And an inkpot the sea,
Still I could not write
All my love for thee.

JAMES HINTON

WHEN I read how those ancient Tyrian men
 (Weary of coasting islands to and fro)
 Sailed to the West three thousand years
 ago,
Sailed boldly by the pole-star, right between
Those strange rock-pillars of the world, and then
 Saw the Atlantic's vast wild ebb and flow,
 And knew that they were first of men to
 know
The sea where Baal-Melkarth sinks at even:

I think of that great sea of natural law,
 By passion's wind tossed, self-restrained
 and free,
Led by the moon of truth, which this man saw,
 And dreamed that Man was steering for
 that sea,
So wonderful, so glad, so full of awe,
 That as God's very Home it seemed to be.

1883.

FOLK SONGS

WHEN I see you rise up dancing,
Your arms outspread from your breast,
You look like a royal eagle,
When he rises from his nest.

∴

OH, I wonder they break not in blossom,
The steps that lead up to your door,
When they feel your footsteps after,
When they see your feet before!

∴

THERE are no words to tell
The love for you I bear;
The love that can be told
— A feather thrown in the air!

∴

THE love that for you I cherish
— How this should be I can't tell —
It is my highest Heaven,
And it is my lowest Hell.

SONNET IN BLANK VERSE

IN truth I think that we are very fools,
And blind and deaf, in truth, that we should live
Within this large fair world with sealèd eyes
And closed-up ears, constructing, each of us,
Around his ego, a poor miniature world
Which is not; seeing not and hearing not
Sounds sweet beyond all sweetness, loveliness
Beyond all love, brief sudden gleams of all things,
In the great world that is.

O God! O God!
Thou Light, Thou Love, Thou Loveliness, Thou
all!
The joy, the joy, borne on the throbbing waves,
O universal sum of soul, O God,
Of Thee! To lose ourselves to find ourselves
In music of the surging of that sea!

Sparkes Creek, N.S.W., August, 1878.

FOLK SONGS

HENCE, they say, they will take me,
Because I love you yet,
They seem to think that absence
Is a reason to forget.

∴

I LOVE you, will always love you,
I have told you again and again,
And it seems to me you listen
As one listens to the rain.

∴

MAD boy, I do not love you,
Nor count your love a boon,
It's entering now its last quarter,
For you were born with the moon.

∴

YOU know not how to love me,
Nor anything out of Love's book,
You know not how to gather
The whole of the soul in a look.

APART from men I roved among the fields,
Within a world where no thing is yet
seems,
Dallied with shadows, fed my heart with
dreams.

I sought out all the joys that Nature yields,
Sweet sights and sounds and odours; I saw below
The calm of tropic seas, far skies above,
Felt that full eager rapture of young love
In which our souls are born.

But now I know
That kiss or touch of human lip or hand
Is far diviner yet than these, more grand
The world of men and women. So at length
I see things as they are and yet have
hope;
I go into the world with joy and strength;
And there alone my spirit finds its scope.

London, May, 1879.

FOLK SONGS

TELL me again that you love me,
And weary not of my name;
The song of the nightingale pleases,
Although it is always the same.

∴

I ALWAYS pull up my stockings
Before I pass your door,
Lest I hear your mother saying:
‘It’s her garters you love her for!’

∴

WHENEVER you come to see me
Wait till night covers the ground,
For then my mother will fancy
You’re the donkey roaming round.

∴

’TWAS two o’clock in the morning,
I felt your heart enter my bed,
And ‘Awake, O rose of the dawning,’
I heard a voice that said.

THE UNFINISHED SYMPHONY

I SHUDDER at the awful airs that flow
 Across my soul; I hear crushed hopes that
 wail,
 And flutter their brief wings, and sudden
 fail,
Wild tender cries that sing and dance and go
In wonderful sweet troops. I cannot know
 What rends within my soul what unseen
 veil,
 And tells anew what strangely well-known
 tale
Of infinite gladness and of infinite woe.

Was I long since thrust forth from Heaven's door
 Where in that music I have borne my
 part?
Or had this symphony its birth before
 The pulse of Nature turned to laws of
 Art?
O what familiar voice, from what far shore,
 Calls to a voice that answers in my heart!

1883.

FOLK SONGS

So falls the dew of Heaven,
To the oleander's feet
As from your face and body
The grace of God, my sweet.

∴

'WHY, this house smells like roses,
Bless me! Who lives here?'
My father asked my mother;
I need not ask my Dear.

∴

Is there anything sweet on the earth,
Is there anything sweet in the skies,
Is there any sweet thing in the sea,
But in your body it lies?

∴

A WOMAN'S body is a garden,
— I seem to have heard so before, —
And the well is in the middle,
And the parsley grows at the door.

PSYCHE

JUST as a snowdrop, rising through the mire,
Against the earth's weight over it out-
spread,

Lifts slowly to the day its delicate head,
And shows abroad the still unstained white fire,
A thing untouched by any hot desire,

Jealousy's stab, life's care, pain's thorny
bed,

The weary heart's long ache where once it
bled,

The whole devastating flame of passion's pyre:

So is her soul, now fanned by Love's warm
breath;

That casts not yet his rose across her
cheek,

While a new smile breaks forth, a
new-born grace,

And her glad restless eager eyes beneath

The joy and shame are hardly bold to seek

The face that shines for her as Love's
own face.

FOLK SONGS

✓
THIS night, as the night before it,
I sleep beneath the sky;
It is on a bed of flowers,
By my dark sweetheart, I lie.

∴

YOUR eyes are full of sweetness,
Your lips are full of fear,
And while your lips breathe: 'Leave me'
Your eyes cry out: 'Come here!'

∴

YOU were as God had made you,
You were not short nor tall,
You were like a spray of flowers,
Hanging against the wall.

∴

SAY if you go to the fountain,
Say if you go to the mill,
Say if you go to the fountain, —
Sweet, I'm beside you still.

MADONNA

My lady once leapt sudden from the bed,
Whereon she naked lay beside my heart,
And stood with perfect poise, straight legs
 apart,
And then from clustered hair of brownish red
A wondrous fountain curve, all shyness fled,
 Arched like a liquid rainbow in the air,
 She cares not, she, what other women
 care,
But gazed as it fell and faltered and was shed.

Familiar acts are beautiful through love:
 A picture that no painter ever wrought,
 Nor poet knew to weave within his
 dream,
Is more than Virgin throned with saints above,
 Only sweet woman made as Nature
 sought,
 And yet Life's symbol of joy's golden
 stream.

FOLK SONGS

OH, I am the King of Hunger,
And I am the Count of Woe,
And, add to these, bird-catcher,
And dealer in old clo'.

∴

'MISTER Thomas,' they called me
When I had money galore,
But now that my pocket is empty,
It's 'Thomas,' nothing more.

∴

I AM like an apple,
You are an apricot,
I have a heart inside me,
— Only a stone you've got!

∴

I HAVE loved as I loved you
No woman in all the land;
But worse than death is my torture,
You never understand.

THE BILL OF LADING

WITHIN the hold they all together fare:
The searching spirit that must ever know,
The challenging eagerness to meet each
foe,
The strong aspiring will to do and dare,
The silent gentleness to stand and bear
The world's disdain and never feel a blow,
Smiles, tears, sweet words, joys, griefs,
that come and go,
Rankling desires that writhe within their lair.

O soul, upon this strangely freighted ship,
Loaded so deeply that the bulwarks dip,
Borne by a wind of such uncertain breath,
Though storm may bend the mast, though calm
descend,
Keep a high courage until the adventure end,
Sail on across Life's billowing sea to
Death.

FOLK SONGS

YOU were the Queen of Turkey,
You were the pearl of the sea,
You were supreme in wisdom
Over all things that be.

∴

I WOULD that I were even,
A little stone in your street,
And then you would tread upon me,
And I would kiss your feet.

∴

NO more I may gaze on you?
What matter or not to see?
We see the soul's delight
However blind we be.

∴

ONCE on a time I thought
Love was a thing for play.
Since I loved you I know
It's a thing for the Judgment Day.

THE POET

THE poet is rhyming at his god's behest:
Of freedom, beauty, joy, and life he sings;
From out the secret human soul he brings
A world of gladness in bright garments dressed.
'To prison with this filthy unclean pest!'
So, as he sings, he hears the obscene crowd,
And in its fury it screams out aloud
Of license, irreligion, and the rest.

He sings in chains: they pierce his flesh like
swords;
Through prison bars his eyes are fixed towards
The impossible Heaven he shall never
gain.
Blood-rusted iron, eating in his heart,
Sets the nerves tingling through him with its
smart:
His rhymes are forged to match that
clanking chain.

FOLK SONGS

How can it be I should love you
If you never seek for me,
As the water seeks the river,
As the river seeks the sea?

∴

O GRANT to me your brightness,
You little shining star,
That I may follow the footsteps
Of my lover who goes afar.

∴

I LOST the ring you gave me,
When I went to the spring one day;
The vow that you made was of water,
And the water bore it away.

∴

To die on the day you marry,
I know will be my fate;
The funeral and the wedding
Will meet at the churchyard gate.

LOST KISSES

How often, looking back, some memories grip
The mind and in the flesh insert their
sting

Because again to life the days they bring
When heart met heart and lip turned not to lip.
For once there was no fitting time to sip,
And once there seemed the taste of sin to
cling,

And once to the other's clasp I dared not
spring;
And then those memories lashed me like a whip.

The irrevocable kisses of the past,
Beyond or body or soul that helps or
harms,

Lie on far shores whose seas for ever roll.
I am not sad, because I see at last
Hereafter Life clasp Nature with both
arms,

Scarce knowing which is Body and
which Soul.

FOLK SONGS

THEY say that you are freckled:
Dear child, you must not mind;
The star-besprinkled heavens
Are well adorned, I find.

∴

TAKE some of your auburn hair,
And make of it strings well blent,
And fix them in my guitar,
For three of its strings are rent.

∴

ALL those kisses you gave me
The last time that we met,
Your little mouth back may snatch them,
If you think that you regret.

∴

JUST now I threw a lemon,
And it rolled against your door;
Why, it seems that even the lemons
Can tell the girl I adore!

THE REVELATION

LONG years ago, beneath another sky,
Where Fate had chanced to place me all
alone,
And soul to answer back to soul was none,
When the clear stream of life seemed running dry.
And I, all comfort gone, left there to lie,
The careless joy of youth for ever flown,
The faith of childhood on the desert
strown,
So that at last I only longed to die:

Lo! Nature came and with a gentle hand
Touched my tired eyes. And then with
lids unsealed
I saw before me with what sweet amaze
A new light shining over sea and land,
Peace, consolation, loveliness revealed,
The light that lightens henceforth all
my days.

FOLK SONGS

GOD rules above in Heaven,
In Hell he rules who can,
And in this little world
There rules the richest man.

∴

FOR him who has no money
Four things still open be:
The hospital, the prison,
The church, and the cemetery.

∴

UPON the gates of the prison
Is written in chalk this verse:
'Here the good man grows evil,
And the evil man grows worse.'

∴

TOWARDS Death we are ever marching
From the very day of birth;
There's nothing we less remember,
And nothing so sure on earth.

BEFORE the soul which is her instrument
Life the musician sits, and all its sighs,
Its shrieks, its shouts, are hers to harmonise
Into great fugal rhythms, subtly blent,
That still like passion-driven winds are sent
Through all its tremulous pulses, where it
lies
Passive, & scarce may tell in what strange
wise
Its life of tidal melody is spent.

What mingled voices I can hear arise!
What throbbing depths of dissonant low cries,
What notes of consolation sweetly stirred,
What sound of joys eternally deferred,
What sad delight, what sudden glad surprise,
What sombre undertone of sobs half
heard!

Nov., 1884.

FOLK SONGS

THERE is never any trusting
To a lover's ecstasy,
For soon it all will vanish
Like the foam upon the sea.

∴

A MARRIED man I was asking:
'Tell me, how do things go?'
'Young man,' to me he answered,
'Marry and you will know.'

∴

BEFORE he embarks on shipboard
A man should always pray,
And twice when he'd be a soldier,
And thrice on his marriage day.

∴

TELL to the world when you're lucky,
Tell them not of your pain;
For better that they should envy
Than laugh when you complain.

WITH stumbling feet and eyes that saw awry,
Across Life's desert sands I groped alone;
Beckoning visions were before me blown;
Dreams I saw wistfully ever passing by,
Like floating clouds across an April sky,
Or seemed to grasp and only found a stone.
Yet still Experience led until, full grown,
I learnt to know the truth from shows that lie.

Now Wisdom meets me after many years,
And all my life at last grows calm. But,
oh!

Why do I draw this sudden shuddering
breath?

What is this awful form that slowly nears,
Serene and yet so pale? How could I
know

That Wisdom must walk hand in hand
with Death?

FOLK SONGS

DON'T marry, my girl, don't marry,
Remain, while you can, a maid;
And may on your cheeks the roses
Only with kisses fade!

∴

MEN are the very devil,
From Adam on, I find,
Though, true it is, we women
Do not remain behind.

∴

A MAN is like a new chest,
With a lock and a key to close,
Good to look on outside,
But within — God only knows!

∴

IF never to know what love is
Seems an unhappy lot,
They yet are more unhappy
Who have loved and then forgot.

BEHIND, as flies the soul with restless speed,
 Dear memories lie that now are pain to
 know,
 Self-torments that rent their hearts out
 long ago,
And unfulfilled desires that writhe and bleed.
It cannot dare to look at them or heed
 How the shapes that come are as the
 shapes that go;
 And shadowed on the mirage-earth below
The visions yet are fair that yet recede.

With quivering muscles and relentless wings
The soul sweeps on alone amid these things,
 Still dreaming of the joys it shall not meet.
It is too proud to fail and sink and cease;
The world set in its heart may give it ease,
 And very weariness may grow half sweet.

Sept., 1884.

FOLK SONGS

TO teach a girl some grammar,
A student once would try;
When some nine months were over
The girl could multiply.

∴

CAN anyone find me the pen of
Saint Thomas of Aquinas?
I want to put in a letter
The love I feel for my lass.

∴

GOD gave to my dark-haired sweetheart
Not only a salt taste of wit,
But capsicum, clove, and carnations,
— That's why her like you'll not hit.

∴

FAREWELL, I love you so much,
I feel I shall soon be dead;
In my will I leave instructions
To bury me in your bed.

THE WOOF OF REMINISCENCE

AUSTRALIAN hills twin-fashioned, large and
sweet,

After a woman's breast; the mighty stroke
Of South Atlantic waves that never broke
Their march magnificent; green leaves that meet
The splendid glint of flowers; seen in the street,
Dream faces and bright hair; soft words
some spoke;

Girl's lips curled petal-wise when joy
awoke;
The red-gowned women in the yellow wheat:

Such are the visions that grow one with me.

Woven across the intenser warp of life;
And when I weary of earth's dust and
strife

I look at will into myself and see,
Eternal images of old delight,
These pensive angels flit before my sight.

Nov., 1883.

FOLK SONGS

IF you only knew how I feel
On the days when we're apart!
No light within my eyes,
No comfort in my heart.

∴

WHEN I am near your door-way
I look the other ways,
But as soon as I have passed it
I turn and gaze and gaze.

∴

AT home they're always asking,
Mariano, if I love you;
'I don't,' my lips keep saying;
My heart still says: 'I do!'

∴

MOTHER, don't let me marry
A little man,
Whom I must lift and carry,
Just like a fan.

THE world is but an instrument of skill
For playing mighty music, in which blends
Man's little voice, or sometimes it contends,
Yet seems to obey at last a lofty Will,
That makes this orchestra His aims fulfil,
Chanting His praise on whom its life depends,
And glorifying humbly His great ends,
This God who made it and whom it worships still.

But lo! in the middle of the midmost strain,
The piercing human voice of Man out-rings,
Even dominates the very soul of things.
And God that aforetime made him comes again,
Thinks all his thoughts, the gifts he bids
Him brings,
And follows shouting what the Child-Man sings.

FOLK SONGS

FAREWELL, my heart, I must leave you,
I shall not see your face,
My lips may not give you their kisses,
My arms not seek your embrace.

∴

O SWALLOW, flying over
God's worlds across the sky,
Have you ever seen, pray tell me,
A sadder thing than I?

∴

THE love that has lasted
Is hard to forget,
For its roots deep down
In the heart are set.

∴

WHAT helps you all this sighing,
And like a madman to cry?
For if for me you are dying,
For another I also die.

A PIONEER

I

A WORLD where impulse, art, joy, pain combine:

Impulse as guide to every act well done;
Art as the way; joy, pain drunk glad from
one

Great sacramental chalice of all life's wine;

O prophet soul, among those now to shine

Who see the victory lost as victory won,

Near his swift eager soul that had outrun,

Even Shelley's spirit of flame — this sight was
thine!

At length we see thy vision and are strong

To yearn with thee, O seer, from out the
night,

We lend our work to this, our thought, our song;

Nor will we cease henceforth from mortal
fight

Until athwart the cloven shades of wrong

Heaven's fields stand fair at last beneath
this light.

FOLK SONGS

YOU are not the first of women,
Nor I the first of men,
Who after love and forgetting
Has turned to love again.

∴

TAKE a hair of your head and tie me
To the pillow of your bed,
And though the hair be broken,
Fear not to find me fled.

∴

EAT and drink, my darling,
And continue to believe
That you hold me as securely
— As water in a sieve.

∴

PUT no trust, my girl, in a lover,
No trust, I say,
The time will come for weeping,
Though you laugh to-day.

II

An awful angel met thee by the way:
Divinely mad, alone among the throng,
We found thee wrestling with the world's
 vast wrong.
No more to be the sophist that men say,
Nerved by that struggle, able to obey
 The law of love and freedom; so belong
Insight and hope to thee which make men
 strong:
Thou shalt prevail at breaking of the day.

And, lo, now that thy strength no more is hurled
 On earth's old wrong, thy light's the
 lovelier shed;
Thy dream doth weave itself across the world
 To sweeten by its sight our daily bread;
And all thy passion is a flag unfurled,
 O trumpet soul that callest from the dead!

Dec., 1882.

FOLK SONGS

EITHER with you or without you
No remedy;
For when I am with you, you kill me,
Without you I die.

∴

IF you really wish me dead
Then stab me where you like,
But let it not be my heart,
Your image there you would strike.

∴

YOU gave me to drink of water
As you came from the well,
And with that water you gave me
A soul as well.

∴

SIT beside my pillow,
When on my death-bed I lie;
With your eyes on my eyes fastened,
I shall not know how to die.

AMONG THE WAVES

Nothing can be as it has been before:

In gusts that cease the sudden wind still
blows,

Telling of no new force that it bestows,
And with heart-riven cry or dull loud roar
Warm billows tumble on the world's hard shore;
Sorrows are joys that pass on into woes
That yet we feel as gladness; but who
knows

Aught that our hands may close on evermore?

O men and women who with me are borne,
Homeless and passion-driven and forlorn

As winds and waves, across this mighty
sea,

Do you see any goal the future hides?
Is there some perfect good beyond the tides?

O wondrous sea of life! O mystery!

1883.

FOLK SONGS

YOU have gone, and idly gather
The flowers on your way,
And left me to find amusement
With tears and sighs all day.

∴

SAINT Gonzalo de Amarante,
Who art by the shore of the sea,
Behold me here where I'm dancing,
And grant what I pray for to me.

∴

TO see you every hour
I'd gladly cease to live,
And never to have met you
I know not what I'd give.

∴

I SING not for any to listen,
Nor because my voice is sweet,
I sing only because I am hoping
That Grief and Pain may not meet.

LOVE MERGED IN LIFE

WHEN as a boy I knew my first love's face,
All glory that round her for me might lie
Shone out upon the earth, the sea, the sky,
And everything grew radiant, and her grace
Became a sweet impersonal power to trace
(For ever with me as the years went by,
And always to be with me till I die)
Colours and lines of beauty in every place.

Eternal Life! since I have heard Thy voice
Speaking from any common devious soul,
Or body crushed & shame-clad, far
above
The stars I reckon hearts, and I rejoice;
For human things are sweet as seas that
roll,
And Life's voice is henceforth the voice
of Love.

June, 1883.

FOLK SONGS

YOUR curved hands lifted water
As a bowl to my lips to hold;
The water was sweeter than honey,
The bowl was finer than gold.

∴

WE looked at one another,
And of words we spoke not one,
But, oh, the things, my darling,
We spoke by looks alone!

∴

THERE are some things in the world
One can never, never tell,
For no one would understand,
Though one told them ever so well.

∴

OUR Holy Father at Rome
Could not do, as I have, this —
To lie all night by your side
And not seize all that bliss.

THE WAY OF THE BLESSED LIFE

I

‘**W**HAT of the soul that for the mere truth’s sake
Let God and Heaven slip to the abysmal
sea,

And left, that he might wander aimlessly,
His nets like that old fisher by the lake,
And knew no priceless pearl was his to take,
And drained the cup of sorrow bitterly —
What thing for these things shall he hence-
forth see?’

So unto Life my guardian-angel spake.

‘Do as Thou wilt’ (then I who heard him cried):
O Life, Thou madst me for Thy larger
ends,

And crushed my hopes in greater hopes
of Thine,

And turned for me earth’s water into
wine,

I only know I know where nothing tends,
And glory in my faith so satisfied.’

FOLK SONGS

Two leaves I always carry,
Plucked from the Paradise Tree;
'Freedom' on one is written,
On the other 'Poverty.'

∴

To love with a love unreturning,
To hope, and to hope in vain,
Of all things that men may suffer
That is the greatest pain.

∴

IN the court-yard of the prison,
There grows a little tree,
And in its shade, my dear one,
I sleep and dream of thee.

∴

FROM thy heart to my heart
There seems to be
The distance I observe
From God to thee.

II

And I was still. For after many days,
Falling from deep to deep, ever to meet
The loose sand shifting still from weary
feet,

Along the wild strange melancholy ways,
To know at last one has strong wings to raise
And soar with, or for rest, is very sweet.
And then Life's voice spake, her pulses beat
Throughout my being with what glad amaze:

'Lo, all those blank three years thou wouldst
destroy,
With arms that sought to reach great
Truth afar,
Yet found her not, I, Life, lay on thy
breast;
My pearl was thine own heart's yet un-
known guest,
Not hiding in some happy distant star,
And Truth is one with Me and I am Joy.'

FOLK SONGS

THE love that the heart is feeling
All may declare somewise,
A man by his mouth may tell it,
And a woman by her eyes.

∴

AT two o'clock of the morning
You will hear a fresh breeze rise;
Come out, O girl of the mountain,
For what you hear are my sighs.

∴

WHENEVER the church you enter,
And on your knees are set,
Pray, if you do not love me,
That I may learn to forget.

∴

YOUR thirst at Love's sweet fountain
It is better to restrain,
For drink what you will of that water
Thirsty you still remain.

III

O Life, O Truth, O Joy, O new-found wings
Of gladness, whereon now I laugh and
soar,
Pursuing Hope to heights unseen before!
Along the way my spirit shouts and sings
For wonder at the gifts the young earth brings;
And keen Desire shall follow him no more,
For after Sorrow came to her she bore
Glad angel children from the heart of things.

Lo, I am he that was beforetime hurled
Through shadowy deeps where only death-
bells ring,
And only stars that fall are clear to see.
Henceforth I walk in light, O Life, with
Thee,
And through my heart upwells that living
spring,
Whose waters are the life-blood of the world.

1884.

FOLK SONGS

WEEP not, my sweet, though sometime
Your heart be a little torn:
Whenever we seek for flowers
We must sometimes find a thorn.

∴

OH, blessed be your mother
And the pains for you she bare;
You are like a bough of blossoms
From your feet all up to your hair.

∴

GIVE me a sign with your lips,
Lovely pearl of the sea,
Give me a sign with your lips,
For your lover I seek to be.

∴

IT is like death to see you,
Your absence brings back day,
But better to die and see you
Than live and you away.

THE GOSPEL OF CONSOLATION

AFTER long struggle I find joy at last:
Like a lost child I wandered many years,
Through the world's forest, full of doubts
and fears,
Amid mysterious glooms and sounds aghast.
But all those desolate years are now gone past,
No more in darkness and in dread I roam,
My spirit finds in light its restful home;
I grasp life's mystery and I hold it fast.

I wish that I might go from door to door,
And lay my hand on every heart that's sore,
And say sweet words, and comfort lids
that weep;
And as a mother, when her child's in bed,
Drops her lips' benediction on its head,
So kiss them and leave them there to
dream or sleep.

FOLK SONGS

A VINE I mean to plant,
A vine against the wall,
And the grapes when they are ripe
Will in your apron fall.

∴

THAT you are little grieves you?
Oh, what barbarity!
The pearls in the sea are little,
Yet the jewels of the sea.

∴

I WISH there were open in Heaven
Some chink that I might look through
To see if there dwells an angel
In beauty equal to you.

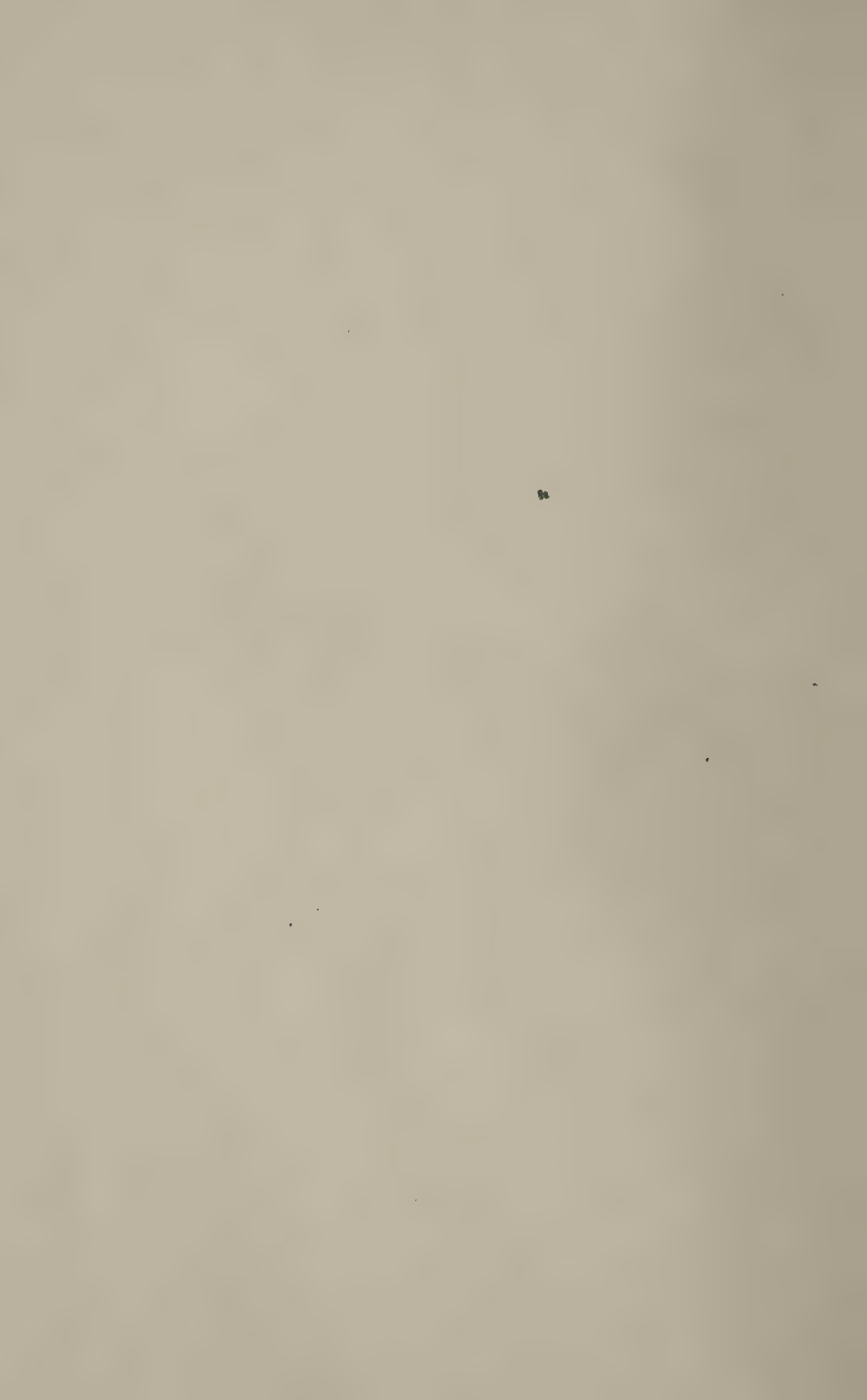
∴

THAT ever I forget you,
Cannot be, dearest one;
The time when I forget you
Life will be over and done.

EPILOGUE

I HAVE seen the form of Life, her face was mine;
 She whispered to me words of heavenly
 mirth;
 She laid my head between her breasts'
 wide girth;
All round about me were her limbs that shine;
She pressed for me the stream of milk divine
 (That no lips twice shall find of equal
 worth);
 And clasped me once, and flung me across
 the earth,
Drunk with that music, mad with that new wine.

A little while to-day I am the cry
 Of pulses, that from Life within me beat,
To tell of things that come, of things that die.
I pray you hear, the day is passing by,
 And soon my song ends, soon I go to meet
 The silence in the shadow of Life's feet.



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